

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the very thorough consideration given the present application.

Claims 12-16, 27-30 and 35-58 are now pending in this application. Claims 12, 27, 36, 44, 49 and 55 are independent. Claims 31-32 have been canceled. Claims 12-13, 15-16 and 27-30 have been amended. Claims 54-58 have been added.

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C § 112, Second Paragraph

Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C § 112, second paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner asserts that the limitation "said response information" lacks antecedent basis. Claim 12 has been amended to remove the quoted phrase. It is respectfully submitted that amended claim 12 fully complies with the requirements of 35 U.S.C § 112, second paragraph.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C § 103

Claims 12-15, 27-29 and 31-32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Behr et al. Claims 16 and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Behr et al. in view of Imielinski et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Behr et al. teach a system for providing travel directions from a base unit to a mobile remote unit. The mobile unit may be a laptop computer, personal digital assistant, a desktop personal computer, or "any other device permitting data entry and display or printing." See column 3, lines 46-50.

In Behr et al.'s system, a person desiring travel directions uses the "data entry" aspect of the mobile unit to enter addresses. The data is sent to the base unit. The base unit formulates travel directions or a graphical map. The travel directions are sent to the mobile unit. The person desiring travel directions can either "display" or "print" the travel directions. In an alternate embodiment, the mobile unit may be supplied with a digitally synthesized voice which audibly presents the travel directions to the user. See column 4, lines 33-34. The present invention is quite distinct from Behr et al.

Applicant's independent claim 12 recites a combination of method steps. The combination includes receiving an information request and voice mailbox identification information from a wireless portable unit, "wherein the voice mailbox is remote from the wireless portable unit." Behr et al. make no

mention of transmitting voice mailbox identification information from a wireless portable unit to the base unit.

Independent claim 12 recites processing text information with a text-to-voice processor to generate an audio representation of the text format information and "transmitting said audio representation to a voice mailbox identified by the voice mailbox identification information." Again, Behr et al. fail to show or suggest converting text information into an audio representation, wherein the audio representation is transmitted to a voice mailbox remote from the wireless portable unit. In Behr et al. only text format or graphical format information is transmitted. An audio representation is not transmitted. Further, there is no usage of a voice mailbox remote from the wireless portable unit in the Behr et al.'s system. (2) Check

The Examiner admits that the Behr system lacks a text to voice processor which transmits a voice output to a remote voice mailbox. See page 2, lines 9-10 of the last Office Action. However, the Examiner asserts that such an arrangement is well known in the art. Applicant respectfully disagrees, and traverses the Examiner's assertion. In accordance with MPEP 2144.03, "if the Applicant traverses such an assertion, the Examiner should cite a reference in support of his or her position." (3)

Moreover, Applicant respectfully asserts that there is no motivation, found in the prior art record, to modify Behr et al.'s system so as to meet the limitations of Applicant's independent claim 12. Applicant notes that on page

4, lines 5-10 of the last Office Action, the Examiner provides several motivations for modifying the Behr et al. reference. Specifically, the Examiner states "users of the mobile units might prefer not to be distracted with certain messages for certain times i.e., while driving in certain areas and would like their messages to be sent to a central location." The Examiner observes that such a modification would allow users of the system to retrieve their audio messages at a later time at their convenience.

Applicant agrees with the Examiner that a voice mailbox modification to the Behr et al. system is quite advantageous. As the Examiner correctly observes, the user of the mobile unit does not need to be immediately distracted with the travel directions. In fact, the user can retrieve the travel directions at a later time at their convenience. However, these advantages are taken from the Applicant's specification in the present invention. These advantages are not remotely suggested in Behr et al. or the prior art of record.

It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner is using the Applicant's own disclosure as the motivation for the modification of the prior art. Behr et al. fails to remotely show or suggest usage of a remote voice mailbox. Further, Behr et al. fails to remotely show or suggest any of the advantages associated with a remote voice mailbox. The suggestion of a remote voice mailbox and the advantages of employing a voice mailbox in conjunction with a method of communicating information to a mobile unit are directly derived from the Applicant's specification.

Applicant's independent claim 27 recites a combination of structural features which parallel the method recited in independent claim 12. Independent claim 27 should be allowable for reasons similar to those discussed above.

Added independent claims 36 and 44 relate to a method and system for providing travel directions. In the method and system, a "voice call" from a person desiring travel directions is answered by a "live" operator. The operator enters the directions into a computer program. Later, a transmitter sends second information to a wireless portable device or voice mailbox associated with the person desiring travel directions.

It is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of Applicant's added claims 36-48 is also not remotely shown nor suggested in the prior art of record. In Behr et al., a rather complex mobile unit is required. The definition of a mobile unit in the Behr et al. patent is a device which permits "data entry and display or printing." Col. 3, lines 46-50. Behr et al. requires such a complex mobile unit because the request for travel directions must be entered in the form of data.

In the present invention, a person can use a common cellular phone and transmit a "voice call" to a live operator which is automatically, electronically answered. Behr et al. simply fails to show or suggest such an arrangement. In Behr et al. the travel directions request is never presented in the form of a

“voice call”. Further, Behr et al. does not provide for a live operator entering information into a computer program.

Applicant’s independent claims 49 and 55 also recite a method and a system for providing travel directions. In the arrangement of claims 49 and 55, a “voice” request for travel directions is converted by a voice-to-text processor. The converted text information is used in accessing an informational database. Second text information is received from the informational database. A text-to-voice processor is used to convert the second text information into a second voice information. This second voice information is transmitted to a wireless portable device or voice mailbox associated with the person desiring travel directions. Again, Behr et al. does not show, or remotely suggest, use of a voice-to-text processor followed by usage of a text-to-voice processor.

For the reasons as stated above, reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn.

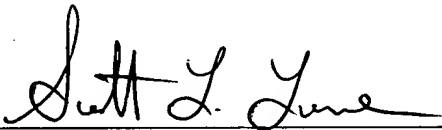
It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Mr. Scott L. Lowe (Reg. No. 41,458) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and further replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1602 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASH & BIRCH, LLP

By 

Scott L. Lowe
Registration No. 41,458

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22032-0747
(703) 205-8000

SLL:lmh

Enclosures: Version with Markings to Show Changes Made

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Specification

The specification has been amended as follows:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 5, line 10 with the following rewritten paragraph:

--In an alternate embodiment, the server 12 [30] connects to the paging service 28 using a dial-up phone line. A modem is connected to the server 12 [30] and a second modem is connected to the paging system 28 such that a dial-up connection is established to transmit data using vendor specific protocol at rates varying between, for example, 2.8 and 28.8 Kbps/sec. In this way, the HTML code containing the requested directions and the user's PIN number can be transmitted as required in step 216 without the use of the IP protocol.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 13, line 5 with the following rewritten paragraph:

--In yet another alternate embodiment of the present invention, illustrated in Figure 4, rather than sending the text based directions to a user's paging system, the server 12 processes the directions with a text-to-speech processor 56, the output of which is downloaded into a user's voice mailbox.

Again, Lucent Technologies, Inc.'s DEFINITY ECS call center system and CONVERSANT software is preferably used. Instead of accessing a paging service, however, the server uses a telephone dialer 58 to connect [correct] to the user's voice mail system 52. (It is understood that in this embodiment, instead of requesting the user's paging service and pin number, the information request page 40 prompts the call taker for [the] a telephone number corresponding to the user's voice mail system 52 instead of pager information.) Upon successful connection with the user's voice mail system, the server 12 outputs the generated speech, whereby the audio directions are sent to and stored by the user's voice mail system 52 for reference by the user at a later time.--

In the Claims

Claims 31-32 have been cancelled.

The claims have been amended as follows:

12. (Amended) A method for communicating with a voice mailbox comprising the steps of:

receiving an information request and voice mailbox identification information from a wireless portable unit;

accessing an informational database with said information request;

receiving from the informational database, text format information in response to said information request;

processing said text format information with a text-to-voice processor to generate an audio representation of said [responsive] text format information; and

[accessing] transmitting said audio representation to a voice mailbox identified by said voice mailbox identification information, wherein the voice mailbox is remote from the wireless portable unit]; and

sending said audio representation to said accessed voice mailbox].

13. (Amended) The method of claim 12, wherein said information request comprises a plurality of geographic addresses [locations] and said text format [responsive] information comprises driving directions between said addresses.

15. (Amended) The method of claim 13, wherein said text format [responsive] information comprises driving directions [in text format].

16. (Amended) The method of claim 12, wherein said informational database is Internet-based and is accessed remotely through HTTP emulation.

27. (Amended) A system for communicating with a voice mailbox comprising:

a call center [receiver] accepting an information request and voice mailbox identification information [of said voice mailbox] from a wireless portable unit;

an interface for transmitting the information request [a connection] to an informational database[, said information request being sent over said connection,] and for receiving responsive information back [being received thereover] from [said] the informational database;

a text-to-voice processor receiving said responsive information in a text format and providing responsive information in a voice format; and

a transmitter for providing said responsive information in the voice format to [said] the voice mailbox, wherein the voice mailbox is remote from the wireless portable unit.

28. (Amended) The system of claim 27, wherein said [receiver] interface comprises a computer server.

29. (Amended) The system of claim 28, wherein said call center [receiver further] comprises computer terminals networked to said computer server.

30. (Amended) The system of claim [28] 29, wherein said [receiver] computer server is Internet-based and is configured to be accessed remotely by said computer terminals.

Claims 35-58 have been added.